



*In Memoriam*  
**Rev Fr Dr K M Matthew**  
(1930 - 2004)

**Shola** (*Indian etym*: wooded, cool, grove..) refers to the moist evergreen, montane forests of the South Indian hills, a very ancient form of primary vegetation (home of wildlife and genetic diversity, and basis of food chain), indispensable for maintaining the watershed of the hills, and consequently for the well-being of the surrounding plains. The health of the hills, the wealth of the plains ("மலைகளின் வளமை, சமவெளிகளில் செழுமை"). Our logo stresses: (a) The two constituents of this primary vegetation, wooded forests below and the grasslands above; (b) sun as the source of energy; (c) cascade as the source of life; (d) the water collected below represents wetlands that release water slowly during the year, referring to environmental awareness generation that takes place at the Anglade Institute, an awareness watershed in action.

## Tireless Botanist and Environmentalist

'Yea, this in him was a peculiar grace....

That before living he'd learn to live

No end to learning' — Robert Browning

With the sudden and untimely demise of Fr Dr **KM Matthew** on 16<sup>th</sup> April, 2004 in Tiruchirappalli of South India, *Peninsular India* has lost one of its renowned plant taxonomists and conservationists. Born on 16<sup>th</sup> March 1930, in Kerala State, he had his early education in his home state, where a committed teacher inspired him to pursue botanical studies. For collegiate studies, he moved to the town of Tiruchirappalli.

Joining the Jesuit Religious order in 1950 as a botany graduate, he creatively used the spare time during his early years of Jesuit training at Shembaganur of the Palni hills during 1950-57 to get acquainted with the plant wealth of the Palni hills of the Western Ghats, S. India, under the inspiring guidance of stalwarts like Frs Anglade, Saulière and Foreau. Completing his M.Sc. degree during 1958-60, he acquired his doctorate (1960-62) on the alien plants of the Palni hills with the guidance of late Fr Dr H Santapau S.J. During his theological studies (1962-66) at Kurseong, he explored the surrounding Eastern Himalayas as well.

During his teaching career as lecturer in botany at St. Joseph's College, Tiruchirappalli, between 1969 and 1989 he was awarded the *Best Teacher Award* of the TamilNadu State Government in 1989. He developed a strong research centre in systematic botany, later called **The Rapinat Herbarium**. After having taught for 4 years since 1967, he pursued his postdoctoral studies (1971-74) at European centres of Systematic Botany and The Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, U.K. It was at this time he visited the major herbaria of U.K. and the continent. On completion of his assignment at Kew, he worked on a world monograph on the *Cornaceae* under ZWO fellowship of the Dutch Government at Leiden. This link with *Flora Malesiana* was to prove decisive in his later research career. This exposure was an eye opener to him as to India's international standing in systematics. Periodic working visits later on enabled him to discuss the situation with experts and he evolved a methodology to improve the system of teaching and research in India. He carried on his monographic analysis, the core of taxonomic research in consultation with full-timers in the task. And on the applied side he started reflecting on the role of tropical botany for the planet.

He reviewed the plant taxonomy in India in the light of his experience in teaching and research for four

decades and indicated some corrective measures. The need of the hour he felt, was suitable leadership ensuring adequate training, a competent technical programme in tune with global exigencies. He coupled it with stringent accountability to quality and framed time-bound programme with finances. He strove hard to establish such a leadership and he succeeded in this venture to a great extent. In his endeavours one could discern a carefully drawn technical programme with wide consultation from specialists, across the globe and also training of suitable personnel in an atmosphere of creativity by habitually liaising with international centres and workers. As a result, during the last two decades, he shaped his ideals into a two-station botanical environmental establishment.

He is the Founder-Director of two complementary natural history establishments which have been basic to all his contributions. First, the *plant diversity research base* (The Rapinat Herbarium, **RHT**) in the University town of Tiruchirappalli that has been generating first-hand scientific data for conservation research and publication of a multi-volume illustrated *Flora* as take-off base for applied research. Secondly, the *environmental base* (The Anglade Institute of Natural History, **AINH**) at Kodaikanal located in the 'Nature Sanctuary' of the Palni hills, where he had achieved both a massive environmental awareness generation programme for the wider community, and conservation research, *ex situ* and *in situ*. As Founder Vice-President of the Palni Hills Conservation Council, he was responsible for the integral conservation management of the Palni hills, part of the Western Ghats of India and one of the 25 Biodiversity Hotspots of the entire planet. To this end he had net-worked with committed environmental organizations and Government departments.

### Plant Diversity Research

"The most productive Indian taxonomist ever", was the comment of a referee for his election as a Foreign Member of the Linnean Society of London indicates his scientific competence and international standing. He had an aggregate of 1,449 field days and 60,644 collections. This intimate knowledge of plants in the field had been invaluable in planning for conservation research. He had been chosen to the membership of IUCN's *Species Survival Commission* for plants for the Indian subcontinent since 1992. Foregoing an opportunity to remain international with his revision of the *Cornaceae* for the prestigious *Flora Malesiana* at Leiden, Netherlands (the only Indian to date) in 1972, he returned home and evolved a modern, illustrated regional *Flora* of Southern India as primary programme, since all the three previous *Floras* (Hooker *et al.* 1872-1897, Gamble and Fischer 1915-1936, Fyson 1932) were outdated.



To improve the botanical knowledge of the region, he extensively carried out field work in four zones. The *first zone*, covered the vegetation of the plains and low altitude hills (< 400 m) including eight out of nine tribal belts of Tamilnadu State. This was published as *The Flora of the Tamil Nadu Carnatic* (1981, 1982, 1983 & 1988): Four volumes, in six parts, 1905 plates of illustrations with 2939 pages of text and 2020 species covered. In the *second zone*, a similar illustrated Flora covered the montane region of the Palni hills, published as *The Flora of the Palni hills* (1996-1999). It was in three volumes under five parts with 1233 plates of illustrations; 2144 pages of text covering 2478 species. The Palni hills, part of the Western Ghats of India, one of the 25 biodiversity hotspots of the planet (Mittermeier *et al.* 1998) also suffered from massive introduction of alien species cultivated or weedy since the arrival of overseas personnel from the 1840s (Matthew 1996, 1998, 1999). The technical programme for the first and second zones was described under the following headings: 1 The tract and field work; 2 Documentation; 3 Illustrations; 4 The Flora, covering: analysis of materials; taxonomy; nomenclature and synonymy; keys; field notes; world distribution and phytogeographic findings.

In the *third zone*, the Coromandel coast, was explored separately owing to historical antecedents (Roxburgh 1795-1820 and Rottler 1803) and the intense pressure from urbanization in recent years. In the *fourth zone* it extends the area of the first zone northwards to the boundary of the State of Andhra Pradesh and includes the Javadi hills, the only tribal belt of the State not included in first zone. It is fair to state that the area he had covered (virtually of the entire Deccan Plateau) is today one of the botanically best known regions in India. These volumes have received international acclaim for the comprehensive field coverage, detailed illustrations, correct nomenclature and thorough treatment of each species. Selling the titles at less than a quarter of the market rates as a service to the user-community was admirable. Field Floras entitled as *Excursion Floras* for the same areas, first in English, later in the vernacular, aimed at door delivery of knowledge of plants to ordinary people. The vision was that local people being taught to recognize the plants around them is essential for involving them in nature conservation and eco-restoration, an environmental imperative for the future. In the recent months he was planning for a 6-volume illustrated *Flora of North Tamilnadu*, completely revising the Carnatic series and extending the field up to the border of Andhra State for more adequate field coverage, but his untimely demise prevented him from completing this gigantic piece of work.

His mammoth publications include more than 12 volumes and 175 research papers. He had completed

21 major research projects funded by reputed international and national agencies relating to Peninsular floristics and Environmental Education. While reviewing his *Materials for a Flora of the Tamilnadu Carnatic* (1981), it was said, "all in all, this is a most commendable project and the complete work will undoubtedly become a valuable reference, for although by no means covering such a large area as Gamble's '*Flora of Madras*', it will nevertheless have dealt with the Flora of the area chosen in much greater depth and detail.... (Radcliff-Smith, 1983)". Likewise the review of *The Flora of the Tamilnadu Carnatic* (1983) mentioned, "it demonstrates what is possible when someone with the knowledge, ability, energy, drive and enthusiasm of Fr Matthew, ably supported by a capable, well trained and also enthusiastic research team, grasps the nettle and single mindedly reaches for a goal which might, to others be deemed unattainable (Radcliff-Smith, 1986)". Taken together with the '*Flora of Karnataka*' by the late Fr C.J. Saldanha, the two have formed a good modern basis to know the vegetation type represented in the flora of the Southern part of the Deccan peninsula and thus would serve as a solid and firm foundation of the new '*Flora of India*'.

### Environment

His environmental work was organized from *The Anglade Institute of Natural History* in the nature sanctuary of the Palni hills. Armed with his plant diversity expertise, he had creatively used and enriched the Arboretum, Conservatory, Fernery, Orchidarium and Gardens (flora) and the Museum (fauna) of the Institute for integral environmental action, with three components: (A) Environmental awareness Generation; (B) Conservation Research; and (C) Wider eco-restoration work on the Palni hills.

#### (A) Environmental Awareness Generation

The objective was to expose the wider community to the prevailing environmental damage in order to motivate and equip them for effective eco-restoration. The target groups were decisive: – *students*, the planners and decision-makers of *tomorrow*; and – *villagefolk*, the custodians of the environment *today*. From both the groups, Leadership Programmes were organized for the more promising trainees in view of the multiplier effect on the wider community. Finding the resources to make the entire programme *free of charge* in view of the poor people daunting, especially the food bill of Rs. 600,000 for some 4,000 persons for three days annually for the past 20 years, 3-day, round-the-year grassroots programme since 1984 as a *live-in* experience in the nature sanctuary has been very successfully, and had handled more than 62,000 trainees in 1215 batches from 425 centres spread all

over South India. The programme had a 3-step dynamic: (a) *informational inputs* on the status of the environment, the local one projected against the global one; (b) in view of *motivating* the trainees for suitable environmental action; and (c) *empowering* them through imparting the necessary *skills*, like initiating them into reafforestation techniques, encouraging them towards collective action and establishing a net-work through nature clubs, etc.

The entire programme was built around the specific *location* (primary forests of the Palni hills) and *infrastructure* (the rich natural history infrastructure of the Institute, floral and fauna). Demonstrations, rather than lectures, were basic. A guided tour of the trainees across the Campus (flora) and the Museum (fauna) on *Day 1* gave an untechnical introduction to the wealth of natural history of the hills, both past and present. An evening keynote on the global environmental situation was a background aimed at preparing the trainees for appropriate localized action. The half day field trip on the morning of *Day 2*, besides reinforcing previous day's nature exposure, provided a unique occasion to learn nature's processes at first hand: watershed concept, eco-system community, food chain, wild relatives of cultivated plants, all explained in a primary forest. An intimate knowledge of these processes is essential in planning eco-restoration programmes back home. This also explained why trainees from far have to travel here to be introduced to worthwhile eco-restoration programmes. Having achieved these at the first two stops on the morning trip, the third one was at a monoculture plot which helped the trainees to imbibe the idea that *Conservation* and *Development* are correlative, and that realistic nature conservation would not be possible without providing the necessary biomass to the people through monocultures.

The important inputs of *Day 3* are: (i) demonstration of tree planting techniques from seed collection to planting out of seedlings; (ii) an evaluation of the programme just completed; and (iii) charting out of action programmes for implementation back home. Conscious of the tax payer paying for their expenses to enable them to attend the programme free of charge, they realize that they have taken a loan that should be repaid in the form of environmental service in due course. **Impact Assessment:** During the year, the project staff visit the trainee centres to check on their programme implementation.

*Shola*, the bi-annual environmental newsletter in vogue since 1987 (32 issues so far), acted as a link among the trainee centres; besides some 100 copies are mailed to international centres. Dr Matthew was open to international exposure and he was the Asian representative of the Jesuit General at the Rio Earth Summit (1992), and has given guest lectures at several overseas centres:

Amsterdam, Netherlands (1989), Heidelberg, Germany (1990, 1991), Yogyakarta, Indonesia (1993), Kew Gardens, U K (1995), and Sydney, Australia (2001). Consequently he received international feedback, as well as resource materials. The intake figures of 62,000 in 20 years, is probably an international record; the fact that the demand for the programme was ever on the increase only, showed that it was answering a felt need in society.

#### (B) Conservation Research

He encouraged and supervised the pioneering efforts of *R W-Stewart* and *Tanya Balcar* and PHCC in conservation research, both *ex situ* and *in situ*. The following list of locally endangered plants already saved from extinction or re-introduced to the Palnis shows how much he expected from this programme:

– Three species represented by a single tree each on the Palni hills were multiplied from locally collected seeds: *Elaeocarpus blascoi*, *Psydrax ficiformis* and *Hydnocarpus pentandra*; – Three endemics, confined to the Pambar Shola, were successfully multiplied and released back to nature: *Hoya wightii* ssp. *palniensis*, *Sonerila pulneyensis* and *Phyllanthus chandrabosei*; – Species that became extinct on the Palni hills, were re-introduced from the Nilgiris: *Alchemilla madurensis*; on the wait list are *Impatiens tangachee* and *Vernonia arborea*. – Very rare species were multiplied and released back to nature: *Utleria salicifolia* and *Pentapanax leschenaultii*. A scheme for the reafforestation of the denuded parts of the Pambar Shola was a success story ably recounted in 8 instalments in *Shola* during 1994-2002. This success story serves as a model for shola regeneration on other hill stations of India as well.

#### (C) Wider eco-restoration work on the Palni hills

The programmes mentioned above were in-house programmes based on which Dr Matthew worked towards wider programme implementation on the Palni hills so that the Palni hills would become a success model for integral environmental programme implementation. As founder Vice-President of the Palni Hills Conservation Council (PHCC), and with field acquaintance of the hills for over half a century, his role was very decisive. The Palni hills with 60% forests, 40% agricultural lands and minimal urban lands decided the nature of the activity. Water is the richest resource of the hills, and with the slogan "**The Health of the hills, the wealth of the plains**", his aim to protect the watershed of the Palnis that feeds the rivers in the plains.

PHCC also initiated the following for eco-restoration: (i) **Green Belt Planting** around the Palni hills (1987-) based on the insight that the best way to protect the hill forests and watershed is to supply biomass to



people at the foothills to forest all their entering the forests. To date, over 4,000,000 saplings have been directly planted out under the PHCC programmes, or distributed to local people from some 17 decentralized nurseries of the PHCC. (ii) The official demarcation of a **Kurinji (*Strobilanthes kunthiana*) Reserve** for the famous folklore plant of the hills that flowers once in 12 years was through Dr Matthew's personal efforts. (iii) The long term security of the watershed of the hills is assured by the declaration of the Palni hills as a **Nature Sanctuary**, shortly expected, contiguous with the Eravikulam National Park of the Anaimalais to the west. Over the years of working for this objective, particular care was taken of the local tribals and villagefolk by involving them in the care of the Sanctuary, that will be their own rather than something imposed on them. This approach is crucial for the success of the, especially in the light of the, antagonism of local people to National Parks programme established elsewhere in the country.

**On 17<sup>th</sup> July, 2004, The Government of India announced that he has been awarded the Indira Gandhi Paryavaran Puraska Award for 2002 for "outstanding and consistent merit" in the field of environment.**

Equipped with adequate competence in plant diversity acquired over a lifetime of field exploration made, Dr. Matthew one of the most knowledgeable botanists in the region whose expertise was widely available. This competence was even more important

in planning for conservation research. From this broad scientific base, he moved into *environment, both education and research*. That both his initiatives are based on institutions he himself had built (The Rapinat Herbarium and The Anglade Institute of Natural History) with provision for their sustainability is noteworthy. Networking with NGOs and Governmental organizations was his highest priority with him: His national and international contacts, both in science and environment, rendered him a valuable consultant in the region.

As an authentic man of clear vision and commitment, dogged perseverance, with fortitude and courage he ploughed a lonely furrow all through his life. He joins the band of unsung Indians living up to their country's tradition of doing one's duty without a thought of the fruits thereof. He was a powerful witness to the culture of science, a culture where the practice of science leads to the making of a life, not merely a living. The following motto from A J Carlson would greet the visitor of the entrance of his Institute "Real research takes everything that the ablest of us can deliver. It is not a union schedule of 40 hours a week but a sweating proposition of 18 hours a day".

*May his soul rest in peace!*

**S John Britto<sup>1</sup> & S Karthikeyan<sup>2</sup>**

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#### The Early Years of Fr. K M Matthew S J

Fr. K. M. Matthew was born on 16<sup>th</sup> March 1930 in an agricultural family. His parents were Mathew Koyippally of Ramapuram Parish and Theresa Caripath of Marangattupally parish. They were practicing Catholics and were very particular to see that their children were brought up as good Catholics. They had four children: K M Joseph (expired on 10<sup>th</sup> Oct. 1983); Sr. Geraldine of St. Antony's Convent, Ernakulam; K M Matthew the third and K M Thomas the fourth who is at present serving as the Vice Principal of Mar Augustinose College, Ramapuram, Kerala.

Our early years in school was post 2<sup>nd</sup> World War period and people had to undergo great hardships. Our early schooling was in the Kalari, a shed on four wooden pillars, learning to learn Malayalam alphabets on tiny sand spread on the ground, looking at the already written Malayalam alphabets on palmyra leaves with "narayam" (a pointed iron pencil-like object) by "asan" (village school master). Our primary education was at Sacred Heart Lower Primary School run by Carmelite Sisters. After completing the fourth standard we went to St. Augustine's High School, Ramapuram run by our Parish Church where we studied in the Upper Primary School followed by High School.

When we were in the High School we had an excellent Science teacher Mr. M.D Abraham from Chirakadavu, who was strict, loving, devoted and a talented teacher. During his time St Augustine's High School was the highest in Science subjects in the ESLC Examination in the whole of Travancore state for three consecutive years. When KM Matthew attended the ESLC Examination he was the top-scorer in Science subjects that year in the school.

After ESLC, KM Matthew joined the St. Berchman's College, Changanacherry for his Intermediate. After completing it, he joined St. Joseph's College, Trichinopoly for B.Sc (Botany). Life in St. Joseph's College made a drastic change in him due to his acquaintance with some of the saintly Jesuit priests of the college at that time. This ultimately led him to think about joining the Jesuit Order. Finally he joined the Jesuit order during June 1950.

— K.M. Thomas, Kerala

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I wish to inform the readers of *Shola* that I have assumed the Directorship of the RHT and AINH from 18<sup>th</sup> April 2004, having been officially appointed by Rev. Fr Francis P. Xavier, the Provincial of Madurai Province. I hasten to thank everyone who shared the grief with us by sending messages of condolence. The work in the Twin Institutions go on following the spirit of Fr K M Matthew. Continue to support us in completing the task left by him.

*Dr. Fr S John Britto S J*

## இயற்கைச் சூழலில் துயிலும் தந்தை கே எம் மேத்யூ

தேசிய அளவிலும் உலக அளவிலும் தாவரவியல் துறையின் வகைப்பாட்டுப் பிரிவில் பெருமையுடன் விளங்கிய முனைவர் அருளடியார் கே எம் மேத்யூ அவர்கள் 2004 ஏப்ரல் திங்கள் 16ஆம் நாள் இறைவனடி சேர்ந்தார். 74 வயதான இவர் நம் நாட்டின் தாவர வகைப்பாட்டியலில் தனிச் சிறப்புப் பெற்றவராகப் பல அரிய சாதனைகளைப் படைத்தவர், சிறந்த கல்வியாளர், சூழல் பாதுகாப்பில் தணியா வேட்கை கொண்டவர், இயற்கையைப் பராமரிப்பதில் புதிய அணுகு முறைகளைக் கையாண்டவர், தமிழக அரசின் "நல்லாசிரியர் விருது" மற்றும் மாநில அரசின் "சுற்றுச் சூழல் விருது" பெற்றவர், எனப் பல்வேறு பாராட்டுக்களைக் குவித்த பெருமகனாரின் மறைவு இந்தியாவின் தாவரவியல் துறைக்கும் சூழல் ஆர்வலர்களுக்கும் பேரிழப்பாகும்.

கேரள மாநிலத்தில் 1930 ஆம் ஆண்டில் மார்ச் திங்கள் 16 ஆம் நாள் பிறந்த இவர், தொடக்கக் கல்வியை தனது மாநிலத்தில் முடித்தார். பின்னர், திருச்சி மாநகர பார்புகழ் புனித ஜோசப் கல்லூரியில் 1950 ஆம் ஆண்டு தாவரவியலில் இளங்கலை, முதுகலைப் பட்டம் பெற்றார், பின்னர் இறைத் தொண்டாற்றத் துறவு பூண்டு கொடைக்கானல் மலைக்குப் பயிற்சி பெறச் சென்றார். பயிற்சி முடியும் நிலையில், தாவரவியலில் முனைவர் பட்டம் பெற பம்பாய் பல்கலைக்கழகம் சென்றார். 1967 ஆம் ஆண்டு திருச்சி புனித ஜோசப் கல்லூரியில் பேராசிரியராகப் பணியைத் தொடங்கினார்.

1971-73 ஆண்டுகளில் மேல் ஆய்வுக்கென இலண்டன், நெதர்லேண்டு மற்றும் ஐரோப்பிய நாடுகளில் சிறப்பு ஆய்வுகள் திறம்பட முடித்து, மீண்டும் கல்லூரிக்குத் திரும்பினார். மேலைநாட்டு அனுபவங்களின் அடிப்படையில், கல்லூரியில் இராபினாட் ஹெர்பேரியமும், கொடைக்கானல் மலையில் சூழல் பயிற்சி மற்றும் ஆராய்ச்சிக்கென ஆங்கிலாடு இயற்கைவள மேம்பாடு நிறுவனமும் தொடங்கி வைத்தார். இந்த இரு நிறுவனங்களும் இன்று, முதல்நிலை ஆராய்ச்சிக்கும், சூழல் நல மேம்பாட்டுக்கும் அரிய தொண்டாற்றி வருகின்றன.

இவரது தாவரவியல் ஆய்வுப் பணியில் முதல் நிலை வகிப்பது தமிழக மேல்நிலைத் தாவரங்களில் நடத்திய ஆராய்ச்சியாகும். தமிழக மையப் பகுதியில் உள்ள நிலப்பரப்பின் தாவரங்களை ஆய்ந்தறிந்து தமிழகத்தின் "கர்நாட்டிக் பகுதியின் தாவரத் தொகுப்புகள்" என்ற 4 பகுதிகள் கொண்ட நூல்களை (1981-88) வெளியிட்டுப் பெருமை சேர்த்தார். இதைப் போன்றே கொடைக்கானலை உள்ளடக்கிய பழனி மலைத் தொடர் தாவர வகைகளை ஆய்வு செய்து "பழனி மலைத்தொடரின் தாவரங்கள்" எனும் 3 பகுதிகள் கொண்ட (1996-99) அரிய பனுவல்களையும் படைத்தார். தமிழகக் கிழக்குக் கடற்கரை மற்றும் வடக்குப் பகுதித் தாவரங்களின் ஆய்வும் மேற்கொண்டிருந்தார். இவ்வாறு இவர் செய்த ஆய்வுகள், அனைத்துலக ஆய்வாளர்களின் பாராட்டையும், தர மதிப்பீட்டையும் பெற்று கல்லூரிக்கும் மாநிலத்திற்கும் நாட்டிற்கும் பெருமை சேர்த்தன.

அன்னாரின் மற்றுமொரு சீரிய முயற்சியாகக் கடந்த 20 ஆண்டுகளாக அவர்கள் திறம்பட நடத்திய சூழல் விழிப்புணர்வுக் கல்வி குறிப்பிடத்தக்கது. கொடைக்கானல் செண்பகனூரில் ஆங்கிலாடு இயற்கை வரலாற்று நிறுவனம்

இதுவரை 62,000-க்கும் மேற்பட்ட மாணவர்கள், கிராம மக்கள், சூழல் ஆர்வலர்கள் மற்றும் தன்னார்வக் குழு தொண்டர்களுக்கும் மகத்தான விழிப்புணர்வை ஏற்படுத்தியுள்ளது. உலக அளவில் இப்பயிற்சி பெரும் ஈடுபாட்டையும் உணர்வையும் தாக்கத்தையும் ஏற்படுத்தியுள்ளது. பழனி மலைத் தொடரின் இயற்கை வளங்களைக் காப்பதற்காக தொடங்கப்பட்ட பழனி மலை பாதுகாப்பு குழுவின் PHCC நிறுவனத்தில் ஒருவராகவும் துணை இயக்குனராகவும் இறுதிநாள் வரை சிறந்த பணி ஆற்றியுள்ளார். இக்குழு நலமான சூழல் திட்டங்கள் உருவாக்குவதில் இவரது கருத்துக்களையும் அணுகுமுறைகளையும் ஏற்றுக்கொண்டு பலதரப்பட்ட சூழல் பிரச்சினைகளுக்கு சிறந்த தீர்வும் கண்டுள்ளது. இரு ஆண்டுகளில் தென்னிந்தியாவின் மலைத் தொடர்களில் சிறப்பாக பழனிமலைச் சாரலில் பன்னிரு ஆண்டுக்கு ஒரு முறை மலரும் குறிஞ்சிப் பெருஞ் செடிகள் மலர விருப்பதைக் கருத்தில் கொண்டு தந்தையவர்கள் வளத்துறை மற்றும் திண்டுக்கல் மாவட்ட ஆட்சியருடன் கலந்துரையாடி குறிஞ்சி மலர் சரணாலயம் அமைக்க (அழிவினின்றும் காக்க) அனைத்து ஏற்பாடுகளையும் செய்து முடித்தார். தனது உயிர் இவ்வுலகை விட்டுப் பிரியுமுன், இவர் ஆற்றிய இறுதிச் சூழல் நலத்திட்டம் என இதனை அழைக்கலாம்.

பழகுவதற்கு இனிமையும், எளிமையான வாழ்க்கை நெறியையும் கொண்ட இவர், அறிவியலின் உயர் கருத்துக்களும் கோட்பாடுகளும் சமுதாயத்தின் அனைத்துத் தரப்பு மக்களையும் சென்றடைய வேண்டும் எனும் நோக்குடன், தனது பெரும் நூல்களைக் குறுகிய எளிய பதிப்பாக தமிழில் வெளியிட்டது இவரது பரந்த மனத்தைப் பறைசாற்றுகின்றது. இன்று இராபினாட் ஆய்வுக்கூடம் இந்தியாவின் வகைப்பாட்டு ஆராய்ச்சிகளுக்குத் தலைசிறந்த ஆய்வகமாகத் திகழ்கின்றது என்றால், இது இவரது திறமைக்கும் உழைப்புக்கும் இலட்சியத்திற்கும் கொள்கைத் திறனுக்கும் விடாமுயற்சிக்கும் சிறந்த சான்றாகும்.

இறைவன் அன்று துணை நின்று இதுவரை இவரை வழி நடத்தியது போல், இன்று அவருக்கு முடிவிலா வாழ்வும் அமைதியும் நல்குவாராக.

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| 1930    | தோற்றம் மார்ச் 16, கேரள மாநிலம், இராமாபுரம்                       |
| 1950    | இறை தொண்டாற்ற துறவு பூண்டது                                       |
| 1958-60 | முதுகலை பட்டம்  |
| 1960-62 | முனைவர் பட்டம்  |
| 1967-81 | புனித வளனார் கல்லூரி பேராசிரியர்                                  |
| 1971-73 | அயல்நாட்டுப் பயணம்; இலண்டன், நெதர்லேண்டு மற்றும் ஐரோப்பிய நாடுகள் |
| 1974    | திருச்சியில் இராபினாட் ஹெர்பேரியம்                                |
| 1984    | கொடைக்கானல், செண்பகனூரில் ஆங்கிலாடு இயற்கை வரலாற்று நிறுவனம்      |
| 1981-88 | தமிழ்நாடு கர்நாடிக் தாவர வெளியீடுகள்                              |
| 1987    | சோலை செய்திமடல் வருடம் இருமுறை                                    |
| 1989    | நல்லாசிரியர் விருது (1984-1985)                                   |
| 1996-99 | பழனிமலைத் தாவர வெளியீடுகள்  |
| 2002    | தமிழ்நாடு சுற்றுச்சூழல் அண்ணா விருது (2001-2002)                  |
| 2004    | மறைவு ஏப்ரல். 16  |
| 2004    | இந்திராகாந்தி சுற்றுச்சூழல் விருது 2002, மத்திய அரசு டெல்லி       |